

**TESTIMONY OF**

**BETTY VARIN, PARAEDUCATOR**

**AFSCME LOCAL "3689" (KILLINGLY PARAEDUCATORS)**

**HB 6881- AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUS  
RELATED TO EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND PARAEDUCATORS**

**LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE**

**MARCH 13, 2023**

Good Evening, Senator Mccorey and Representative Currey and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Betty Varin and I have been a Paraeducator at Killingly Public Schools for three years . I am here to testify in favor of HB 6881- AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUS RELATED TO EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND PARAEDUCATORS.

I am writing this letter to help all of our paraprofessionals in our district gain the income that we all deserve and need. With a pay increase, we can live within a budget that we can afford to help our families maintain our homes and our children's lives with their needs. It has been a real hardship for many of us and because of our low pays we are struggling with our finances greatly.

Speaking for myself, I had to take on a second job, in order to pay my bills.Plus,help my children with college and among other bills etc. You have to look at the prices of electricity, oil, fuel, food and see the increase does not meet our paychecks.

For instance:Ten month employees are not paid enough holidays, only three, all other staff in the building get paid all holidays throughout the school year.

It is showing that the average wage of a ParaEducator in CT is \$24,000, we don't even make half of this wage here at Killingly. Not only do we not make half of this wage, in order to make ends meet for a single family member with no children to survive it is estimated to have an annual salary of \$32,000.

Personally, I have 4 children to support and that is not including my husband and I. We are a family of 6. It is impossible for us to make ends meet on this salary, I feel like I can not even give any. If this bill does not pass, my family and I will severely be in more hardship.

HB 6881- AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUS  
RELATED TO EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND PARAEDUCATORS. I urge you to support this legislation.

ParaEducators are productive workers in the school community and give a lot of themselves to their students and their families. ParaEducators work side by side with teachers in providing Education to all of our students. but we also need to take care of ourselves and our own family.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

-Betty Varin